Instructional Strategies

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Strategy 1

Name of Strategy: Bellringer Bingo

Purpose: To provide students with an alternate way to review vocabulary words.

Materials:

* Scrap paper
* Pencil, pen, colored pencil or marker
* Vocabulary definition cards

Procedure: Have vocabulary words written on the board. Set a timer for three minutes and tell students make a 3x3 grid on scrap paper, and then fill in with vocabulary words. They have to get a classmate to autograph their game piece to make sure no one fills in during the game. You have the definitions on index cards, which you shuffle, then call out the definitions only. Students mark off the corresponding vocabulary word. This takes about ten minutes and is a good way to review. [www.TeachersPayTeachers.com](http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com)

Possible Uses:

* Can be used for vocabulary tests for Social Studies or Science
* Can be used for to review math terms

Reflection:

I really liked this idea to use as a review before a vocabulary test so students can study the words that they are not familiar. This activity can also be used as the test at the end of the week but by already having the definitions typed up on the 3x3 grid and also by using definitions from prior chapters or units to change it up. This is a great strategy for any subject.

Strategy 2

Name of Strategy: Parking Lot

Purpose: To address student questions and comments during a lesson or activity.

Materials:

* Butcher paper
* Post it notes
* Markers, pens or pencils

Procedure:

* Using a blank piece of butcher paper and post it notes, students write down questions and comments they have during the activity and can post them there.
* During the period or lesson, the teacher will check the parking lot to address the questions.

Possible Uses:

* Social Studies/Science: Can be used to summarize the lesson or an alternate to note taking.
* Social Studies/Science: Can be used to identify the main idea and details of text

Reflection:

This is a great strategy that can be used for any subject area or topic you are covering in class. It can also be used as a main idea and details strategy. It also helps students that are not great at class participation to ask questions or respond to questions without having to raise their hand in class.

Strategy 3

Name of Strategy: Exit Slips

Purpose: To have students to provide immediate feedback to the lesson through short answer response or write down a question regarding the lesson.

Materials:

* Scrap paper or created template
* Pencil or pen

Procedure:

* At the end of class, have a student pass out pieces of scrap paper or write on teacher created template.
* Each student needs to write a complete sentence about what they learned in the day’s lesson, something he’s confused about or a question he has.

Possible Uses:

* All: Allows teachers to check for student understanding, address questions or review areas of concern for students.
* Can also be used to have students reflect on what they learned for the day and how it will help them improve.

Reflection:

This strategy is very good for students to quickly reflect on what they learned but to also allow the teacher to know which students understand the lesson and the ones that need re-teaching or additional support. This also helps the teacher evaluate their lesson, pacing of the lesson and to check for student understanding.

Strategy 4

Name of Strategy: 10/2/2

[www.teacherspayteachers.com](http://www.teacherspayteachers.com)

Purpose: To provide students with opportunities to reflect and collaborate with their peers.

Materials:

* Notebook paper
* Pencil or pen

Procedure:

* Lecture to students for about ten minutes
* For two minutes, have students write
* Give students two minutes to share with a partner

Possible Uses:

All: Allows students to work through their learning and share their ideas with their peers.

Reflection:

This strategy can be used in any content area and activities you are working on in the classroom. This strategy is useful when students are learning new material and need time to process, reflect and then share what they know.

Strategy 5

Name of Strategy: Think-Ink-Pair-Share/Two-Word Reflection

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat36.html>

Purpose: This reading strategy is to have students synthesize and summarize what they have read in two words and share their ideas with a partner.

Materials:

* Reading book/article
* Index card or notebook paper
* Pencil or pen

Procedure:

* After reading a selection, have students write down two ideas.
* Ask students to pause and reflect about the information
* Ask them to write two words that stand out as key ideas (words do not have to be related to each other.)
* Think: Why did you select these two words from the article/reading selection?
* Ink: Write your reasons for your choices.
* Pair: Find a partner.
* Share: Share the two words selected from the article/reading selection.
* Share the reasons for your “Stand Out Words.”

Possible Uses:

All: Allows students to work their ideas and share with a partner in content area material.

Reflection:

This is a great strategy that helps students narrow their focus to synthesize what they read in only two words. Strategy 6

Name of Strategy: Sketch-to-Stretch <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat29.html>

Purpose: Students draw quick sketches to stretch their thinking and understanding of concepts.

Materials:

* white construction paper or copy paper
* pencils/pen
* colored pencils, markers or crayons

Procedure:

* After reading a selection, students draw sketches that illustrate key ideas and details.
* Students present their drawings to explain how they made connections with the information revealed in the text.

**Examples:**After reading a description of the nesting habits of hummingbirds, students draw a sketch that shows how they visualized the details: the place a nest would be found, the size of a hummingbird’s nest, materials used to build the nest, the number of eggs in a nest, the color of eggs, and how parent(s) of baby hummingbirds take care of their young. Students can draw a series of sketches to reveal the development of baby hummers from egg to first flight.

Possible Uses:  
1. Fine Art: invite students to write captions (words, phrases, or sentences) for sketches.  
2. Science: when students work in small groups, Sketch-to-Stretch can be used to illustrate a series of events. For example, each person in a group sketches a different phase in the life cycle of a monarch butterfly.

Reflection:

This strategy also supports other reading strategies. This is a good strategy because it requires students to share their thinking but also begin making connections to what they already know through visuals. It is another way for students to summarize and synthesize information.

Strategy 7

Name of Strategy: VIPs- Very Important Points

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/InstrucStrat38.html>

Purpose: To have students quickly identify and summarize the important facts in a text selection.

Materials:

* Various informational reading selections
* Notebook paper
* Pencil or pen

Procedure: After reading an informational selection, ask students to make a list of “Very Important Points” answering the following question: “What were the most important facts revealed in text?”

Possible Uses:

* Social Studies: Have students use VIPs to summarize sections of the chapter in small groups. Then have students report out their facts for class notes.
* Science: Have students use VIPS to summarize reading selections.
* Reading: Use for analyzing text structures of similar topics.
* All: Can be used as a note taking strategy.

Reflection:

This strategy is very good for having students summarize the very important facts of what they’ve read and another way for students to take synthesized notes. This keeps the students from trying to write down everything that they read. It also helps the teacher identify students that are still struggling with the text selection or with summarizing.

Strategy 8

Name of Strategy: Scavenger Hunt

<http://www.ehow.com/way_5855820_treasure-hunt-strategy.html>

<http://www.ehow.com/how_6085672_teach-treasure-hunt-methods.html>

Purpose: To assess whether students can apply their knowledge of a particular topic, and to have fun while doing so!

Materials: Pencil, list of clues

Procedure:

* Give students a list of clues that will require them to consult their notes or book to discover clues.
* The answer to each clue should lead students to the next clue. Students may work in groups to collectively determine answers to clues.

Possible uses:

* Clues can lead students on a scavenger hunt around the school, around your classroom, or within their textbook.
* For math, find geometrical shapes and concepts around the school (parallel lines, congruent figures, etc…) give students clues as to the name of the concept and its vicinity and have them write down where they find it (i.e. congruent quadrilaterals, students identify the square tiles on the floor in a particular location)

Reflection:

This is a great strategy for kinesthetic learners as it requires them to move around and be out of their seats. It can be used as a formal assessment to make sure they have retained knowledge of prior lessons. This can be used for any subject area, and clues themselves can be altered to address differentiation needs.

Strategy 9

Name of Strategy: Sculptures

<http://www.mycoted.com/Sculptures>

Purpose: To give students an alternative to paper and pen methods for proving what they know and can do.

Materials: Can use anything, really, but some examples include scissors, felt-tipped pens, pencils, glue, sticky tape, string, staplers, paper, cardboard boxes, wire, paper-clips, bits of wood, garden canes, modeling clay, and any other household item that is easy to obtain.

Procedure:

* Familiarize the class with the topic and review as needed.
* Explain guidelines for the finished product of the sculpture and limit the materials used, if needed. Provide a sample ahead if time if applicable.
* Have students create their sculpture, walking around and assessing while they work.
* Add steps and procedures as applicable for different topics.

Possible uses:

* Science: create a large scale molecule
* Social studies: create a 17th century ship damaged by a battle at sea
* Math: Design an item used every day (house, car, computer, phone, etc…) using only the geometrical shapes learned thus far
* This strategy is very open and can be applied to any subject area

Reflection:

This strategy can be used as a formal assessment to ensure they can apply what they’ve learned in prior lessons. It is great for kinesthetic and artistic learners as it’s hands-on and allows for student creativity. This project is a great opportunity to show case student work, so it might be a good idea to plan some space either in your room or around the school to do so.

Strategy 10

Name of Strategy: Similarities and Differences

<http://www.mycoted.com/Similarities_and_Differences>

Purpose: To bring students outside a factual way of thinking and utilizing what they know to understand a different perspective.

Materials: paper, pen, objects to be compared, if applicable

Procedure:

* Decide on 2 objects to compare, a problem object and comparison object.
* Complete a list of aspects that are similar to both objects.
* Complete a list of aspects that are different of both objects.
* Provide essential questions for students to consider based on their lists, as appropriate for academic level.

Possible uses:

* Science: compare an infra-red sensor to the human eye
* Math: compare an absolute value and quadratic function; compare fractions and decimals
* Reading: Compare the main characters of two different Shakespeare stories

Reflection:

This strategy could be used for any content area and for any grade level. Students will have to be familiar with certain factual evidence of individual objects, but by comparing these aspects with one another they will also be able to see how they can relate to other objects.

Strategy 11

Name of Strategy: Mini White boards

<http://www.foridahoteachers.org/instructional_strategies.htm#.Un6MQfnkuSp>

Purpose: To obtain immediate feedback on student knowledge for specific questions. Allows every student to participate and increases individual accountability.

Materials: small white board, dry erase marker, and tissue

Procedure:

* Provide each student with a small white board, dry erase marker, and a tissue (to wipe the board clean between questions)
* Ask a question or write one on the board
* Have students write their answer on the mini white board and hold it up so you can see every student’s answer

Possible uses:

Can be used for just about any question in any classroom, but have seen it mostly for quantitative questions, such as those seen in math classes.

Reflection:

I have seen this strategy work well in the math classroom as it provides engagement for all students. It also allows for a quick formative assessment for teachers to see which students understand the concept or skill, and which students may need some additional support.

Strategy 12

Name of Strategy: Sticky Note Graphs

<http://www.foridahoteachers.org/instructional_strategies.htm#.Un6eGPnkuSp>

Purpose: To allow students the opportunity to analyze questions that have multiple correct answers, and to determine their preferences based on facts.

Materials: sticky notes

Procedure:

* Give each student an appropriate number of sticky notes (number will vary by number of questions you plan on asking)
* Ask students a question (a question with multiple correct answers works best with this strategy, but works with other question types too)
* Have students write their answers on the sticky note and post them to designated areas of the wall
* Discuss the various answers and have students defend their choice

Possible uses:

* Science: Question would be “Which animal is most important to sustaining the jungle ecosystem?” Can have categories such as “Carnivores”, “Herbivores”, “Birds”, “Insects”, etc… and students will place their answers in the correct category.
* Math: Provide students with an equation and ask them to identify what the graph will look like. Answer choices would be “Ellipse”, “Parabola”, “Hyperbola”, “Circle”, “Square root”, “Cubic”, etc…

Reflection:

This strategy creates an opportunity for students to use what they know and form their own opinions on a particular question. I like how this strategy will encourage students to think for themselves, form an opinion based on facts, then defend their answers/opinions. This definitely addresses higher level thinking on Blooms Taxonomy.

Strategy 13

Name of Strategy: Dog Paddles

Purpose: To provide a quick assessment on introductory topics.

Materials: construction paper/card stock, tape/glue, popsicle sticks

Procedure:

* Have students create (or create yourself) a set of paddles that name two particular responses.
* Ask students questions, and for each question have them hold up the appropriate paddle.

Possible uses:

* Science: One paddle says “carnivore” and the other says “herbivore”. Show pictures of different animals and have students determine their correct category.
* Math: One paddle says “prime” and the other says “composite”. Show students different numbers and determine their type.
* Social studies: One paddle says “socialism” and one says “capitalism”. State a societal aspect and have students determine which type of socity applies

Reflection:

This strategy can be used for any subject area and allows students a greater chance of success since there are only two choices. This is also a great activity for kinesthetic learners as it gives them the opportunity to answer by using their body.

Strategy 14

Name of Strategy: Foldables

<http://franklincountyschools.k12tn.net/Show%20Me%20the%20Strategies.htm>

Purpose: To have students create a reference for themselves as they are learning new material.

Materials: paper, writing instruments

Procedure:

* Have students fold a piece of paper so that it looks like a pamphlet.
* As new topics are introduced, students should be adding the new information to their foldable.

Possible uses:

* Math: Have students write each exponent property and an example on a separate panel of the foldable.
* Reading: Each panel will have information about a different, important, character from the story.

Reflection:

This strategy can be used in any subject area where a study guide would be helpful to students. In essence, they are creating their own study guide, which holds them accountable for their own work. This product should be carefully assessed for mistakes if students are to be using this for reference to ensure they are not remembering false information.

Strategy 15

Name of Strategy: Grab Bag

http://www.gips.org/assets/files/Learning/CheckingForUnderstanding/Grab\_Bag.pdf

Purpose: Near the conclusion of a lesson, students draw an object from a bag. The students must explain or illustrate how the object is related to what they have learned. Checking for understanding allows students to learn important content concepts.

Materials: May vary depending on topic or subject. Bag, note cards and objects.

Procedure: Grab bag is a type of review that can be based on teacher-generated material. Simple paper lunch bags and pieces of paper are all that are needed. Each student reaches into a paper bag and draws out a slip of paper on which they or the teacher has written a lesson related question, answer, name, fact, concept, phase, or any combination of these. Students take turn responding to their draw by answering the question, finding the corresponding answer to his or her question with students in the room, or explaining the significance of the lesson related information. The sharing can be done whole group, small group, or with a partner.

Possible uses:

* Science: Grab bag can be used for science review, using model objects students can draw a relation to how this object was used in relation to what they just learned.
* Reading: Grab bag can be used for vocabulary review, using words and definitions on separate slips of paper for students to draw out of the bag and match
* Art: Grab bag can be used for art review. Using images or paintings, students can identify artist name, date, title and brief description.

Reflection: Using grab bag is a great way for both teacher and students to review at the end of a lesson. This allows teachers to see that students have understood the material being presented. Grab bag can be used in almost all subject areas as a fun and exciting way to review

Strategy 16

Name of Strategy: Story Maps

http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/pd/instr/strats/storymapping/index.html

Purpose: story maps enhance students’ interpretative abilities by enabling them to visualize story characters, events and setting. It increases students’ comprehension of selections by organizing and sequencing main story events. This develops students’ sense of story which will assist storytelling, retelling and writing; allows awareness that story characters and events are interrelated.

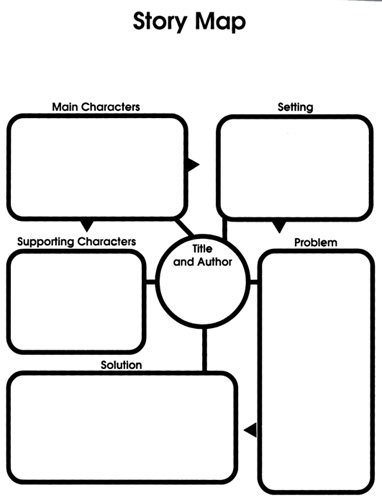
Materials: story mapping worksheet

Procedure: introduce students to story mapping as a collaborative activity and allow students to visualize the characters, settings and events as they listen. Discuss and chart the main characters and story events, review the chart, focusing students’ attention on the sequence of main events. Emphasize what happened first, next and then; as students agree upon the order of listed events, number these in sequence. Individuals or groups could each illustrate one story event and display illustrations in sequence when completed. This pattern or framework can be used for retelling the story; students can retell the story in a small group or to the whole class.

Possible uses:

* Science: students may construct written maps or story graphs, or they may use combinations of drawings and words to outline sequence.
* Writing: as a prewriting activity, students could sketch the beginning, middle and concluding events as frameworks for their stories.
* Reading: students could use paper folded into six equal sections to illustrate and outline a story in six parts. This framework could assist storytelling or story writing.

Reflection: story mapping allows teacher to note students’ ability to identify main story characters, events and ability to sequence story events. Story mapping revels students’ level of comprehension of story events and structure. Variation among students’ story maps illustrates their personal interpretations.



Strategy 17

Name of Strategy: Carousel Brainstorming

http://its.guilford.k12.nc.us/act/strategies/carousel\_brainstorming.htm

Purpose: to activate students’ prior knowledge of a topic or topics through movement and conversation.

Materials: poster boards, different colored markers and stop watch.

Procedure: while carousel brainstorming, students will rotate around the classroom in small groups, stopping at various stations for a designated amount of time. While at each station, students will activate their prior knowledge of different topics or different aspects of a single topic through conversation with peers. Ideas shared will be posted at each station for all groups to read. Through movement and conversation, prior knowledge will be activated, providing scaffolding for new information to be learned in the proceeding lesson activities.

Possible uses:

* Math: carousel brainstorming can be created for students to solve problems using both number and word problems.
* Reading: carousel brainstorming can be created to allow students to understand plot, setting and characters of current reading.

Reflection: carousel brainstorming allows students to work in groups and solve problems. This activity allows students and teacher to see ideas and answers presented from each group.

Strategy 18

Name of Strategy: Journals

http://www.beesburg.com/edtools/glossary.html#J

Purpose: Curriculum oriented journal entries have the advantage of causing students to relate personally to the topic before instruction begins. Asking for a summary of learning or for a question or two the student still has at the end of the period causes the student to process and organize his or her thoughts about the material covered.

Materials: Journal and writing utensil

Procedure: Writing typically done for a few minutes each day is done in a notebook and is often used to encourage reflection or exploration of ideas of interest to the students. Journals can be used to express thoughts or as a ongoing written dialog between student and teacher.

Possible uses:

* Writing: journals can be used as a dialog where students can voice their opinions and thoughts on the teacher responds.
* Art: journals can be used to sketch and put into practice new terms that have been learned in class.
* Science: journals can be used to record models, science experiments or class notes.

Reflection: journal writing is a flexible instructional tool, useful across the entire curriculum. While often used as a class startup activity, it is used primarily to give students an opportunity to speculate on paper, confident that their ideas, observations, emotions, and writing will be accepted without criticism.

Strategy 19

Name of Strategy: PLAN predict, plan, add, note

Purpose: this strategy consists of four steps that students use before, during, and after reading. It helps students transform from learning to read to reading for information.

Materials: paper and writing utensil.

Procedure: students predict the content and structure of the text and assess its potential for the given task or purpose, locate information that is known or unknown, add words or brief phases to the map to explain the new information, and note the new understanding gained and use it to complete the task.

Possible uses:

* Science: PLAN can be used as a recording tool in science experiments.
* Reading: PLAN can be used in a reading assignment where students can predict before they start reading and record their findings.

Reflection: This strategy can be used for almost any subject where it allows students to locate important information and learn to read for information.

Strategy 20

Name of Strategy: Four Corners

Purpose: Teacher labels four corners of the room with disagree, strongly disagree, agree, strongly agree. After reading a controversial statement and write on a piece of paper whether they agree, disagree, strongly agree, or strongly disagree with the statement. When all are finished writing students go to the corner representing their point of view. All students share a point of view to collect evidence and present an argument supporting their beliefs.

Materials: Paper and writing utensils.

Procedure: Teacher writes a controversial statement on the board for all students to see then students write on a piece of paper whether they strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree or disagree with the statement and why. Once they have finished students go to the corners of the room based on their responses. In each group students voice opinion, thoughts and reread text for evidence to make a list of reasons why they are right. Once they are ready they present their case to the class and classmates can ask questions to challenge other groups. After every group has presented their case classmates have the option to change groups if they have been convinced.

Possible uses:

* Reading: Corners can be used while reading a controversial book and the teacher presents them with a touchy question where students can write what they think and form groups to support their reasons.
* History: Corners can be used in war topics such as WWI or WWII to see where students stand and try to persuade other classmates to agree and see their point of view.

Reflection: This strategy can be used in almost all subjects and it allows not only to voice their opinion, but also look up actual evidence and present their findings with the class in order to persuade their classmates to have the same opinion as them. It’s a fun and creative way to have students write, research, present and persuade.